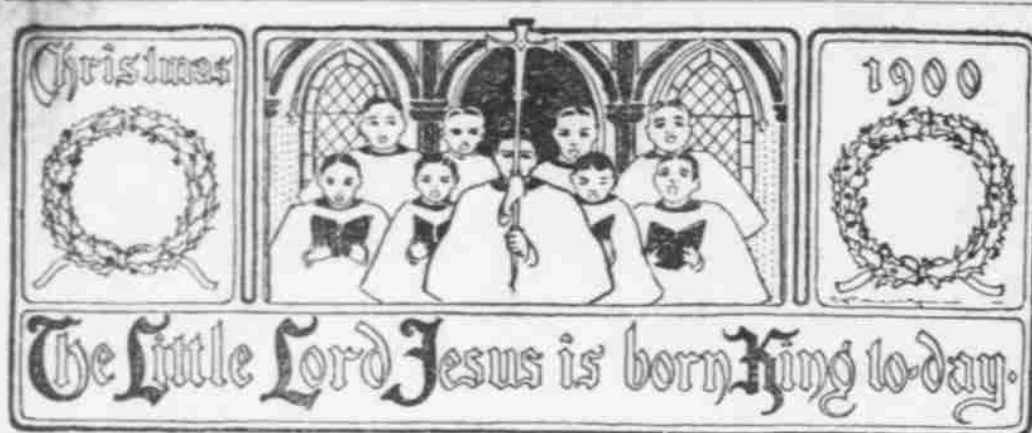


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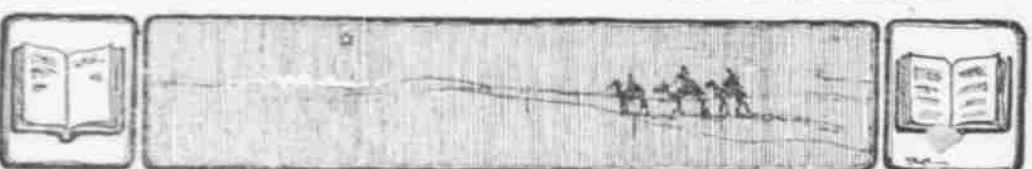
CAROLERS, chanting a song of pure gladness,
Worshippers, sounding a joyful refrain,
What are these tidings that conquer earth's sadness,
Echoing softly o'er city and plain?
Hark to the winds and the waters replying,
Jubilant, glad some, their song seems to say,
Over the winter world floating and flying:
The little Lord Jesus is born King to-day!

FAR, where the Bethlehem valleys lay sleeping
Silent and calm in the peaceful moonlight,
Came there a burst of high melody sweeping,
Rhythmic and tender, one wonderful night;
Clearer it sounded, the silver stars brightened,
Softer, their brilliance faltered away,
Louder, the plain with fair angel forms whitened—
The little Lord Jesus is born King to-day!

SHEPHERDS, on guard where the tired flocks
were resting,
Started at sound of the wonderful song,
Wise men rejoiced, as, their long-held faith testing,
Sweetly triumphant 'twas carried along;
Sages and toilers alike knew the glory
Of music and angels and heavenly ray:
Listen! We still hear their worshipping story:
The little Lord Jesus is born King to-day!

STILL to the thinkers and toilers who need Him
Comes the dear Christ-child when winter is drear,
Still, through His "little ones" we all may feed Him,
Clothe Him, and shelter, and cherish Him, dear.
So in the silence which follows earth's sadness,
Waiting, in faith, till the night pass away,
Angels shall come, with their message of gladness:
The little Lord Jesus is born King to-day!

ETHEL M. COLSON.



A RESURRECTED CHRISTMAS

By Elvira Floyd Froemcke

ONE of those misty, gray evenings so common to December, a certain street corner was suddenly enlivened by a gay whistle, a boy, a bundle of hand-bills and a bucket of paste. With the cold gaze of the electric eye upon him, the boy plastered a bill upon the tall wooden pole, and then stepped back to gaze admiringly on his work, and to give an extra dab or two at the lower edges which thereupon clung to their support in approved artistic style.

Three women were approaching from different directions, and, thinking to do a good stroke of business for his employer by attracting attention to his advertisement, he whistled very shrilly and quite off the key, as he slowly picked up his bill to leave.

One old lady stopped and exclaimed, impatiently:

"If you must whistle, why don't you whistle in tune?"

The boy only laughed good-naturedly, and took himself off in haste, but the two women approached, and, with expressions of surprise and pleasure, for they were old friends, and at the very moment of meeting each had been thinking over bygone days, when their lives were closely interwoven.

"Well, here we are," joyfully exclaimed Estella; "three graces in ungraceful attire! Did you ever hear such a fearful whistle as that boy had? First he took me off my feet and then I frightened him into finding his. Do see him run," she added, as the youth disappeared round a corner.

"Are you going home?" she inquired.

They simply answered: "Yes," and all turned to read the poster that had seemed to draw them together:

PROP. WENSEL
Lectures
Tuesday, Dec. 14, and Thursday, Dec. 16,
PSYCHIC MEANING OF CHRISTMAS.

"Well?" they all exclaimed, "what does he mean by that?"

"It seems to me easy enough," said Penelope. "It is having the spirit or soul of the season within. I used to think of these things once, but Christmas seems a dead season now. Funny, too," she laughed, "when I have been under my arm 15 proof sheets of Alton's new Christmas story, which I am to correct this very night."

"And I," said Estella, "never celebrate the day now, though I am teaching six new Christmas carols to my pupils, and have an anthem in my music roll to practice for Christmas service in our little church."

"And I," puffed Urania, "have ten pounds of dried fruits for the Christmas mince pies. It all goes to those greedy boarders of mine, and I am too tired to know what Christmas means in these days. It is a dead anniversary and practical people have outgrown it."

A flare from the electric lamp sent a light over the three keen, intelligent old faces, and revealed three hands clasped closely and sympathetically. They were all well over 60, and their faces bore marks of sorrow, courage and well-fought battles.

Penelope and Urania were what the world calls "old maids" (loving friends would have another name). In youth Penelope had had family, home, wealth and ease; now all these had passed from her. She was merely a book canvasser when "the firm" required her services, or a stenographer or proof-reader when that sort of work pressed. Her "home" was a back room in a shabby house, on a dull street in the sleepy old city; her only relative a brother, remained. He, alas, was hopelessly insane, yet the brave woman supported him, always spoke of him as "my weak-minded brother," visited him on every holiday, and

strove with love and gifts to recall the poor wandering mind. In this duty she never failed; remaining as loyally true to him as to her young lover who had been drowned at sea 45 years ago.

Urania had been an only child, motherless from birth. Her noble old father had laid down his life for his country on the battlefield of Gettysburg, and, after mourning him so sincerely many years (assisted by numerous impecunious relatives), she awakened to the fact that her money was spent, her house mortgaged, and she was on the verge of ruin through their "care and sympathy."

She picked up courage, swept her house of kinsfolk, and went practically into the business at which she had played too long. She was plump, rosy and motherly, with great soft hands, a tender heart and a kindly spirit—a great contrast to the pale, ethereal Penelope and the slight, nervous Estella, but her very dissimilarity was an attraction to the others, their different characteristics serving to draw out the best of their natures.

Estella, who lately returned to the old town where all had lived in their early girlhood, with love and gifts to recall the poor wandering mind. In this duty she never failed; remaining as loyally true to him as to her young lover who had been drowned at sea 45 years ago.

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cough of hers. "A little less noise, young ladies, please!"

"Let us do it all over again," cried Estella. "Come to my rooms on Christmas night at five o'clock. Urania may send the cooked chickens; you, Penelope, shall send the nuts and candies, and I will do the rest."

Prof. Wensel did not become richer in pocket through these old ladies, but if, as he said repeatedly in his lecture, spiritual rewards always found and enriched him, he must have been in affluence after this night.

People wondered why Urania laughed so much, one old boarder saying some one must have left her a fortune. Another thought she must be on the lookout for a husband, after which astute conjecture he gave extra attention to his hair and clothes, and tied his scarf with wondrous care.

Penelope worked with such zeal that her employers were surprised. One day she hummed a little tune to herself, at which the junior partner remarked:

"By Jove, there's plenty of courage and work in the old yet."

Estella spent every spare moment in making her two rooms beautiful and immaculate. She had ceased to grumble about the chimney place being draughty. It was no longer "an unsatisfactory heater and nuisance out of date." It was now glorious, such a perfect ventilator and so cheerful.

On Christmas day she was prompt at church. The anthem passed off capitally. Everyone was pleased. She visited the children's ward in the old hospital, and was so funny and lovely that the pale little creatures stretched out their hands to her, and laid a little with their house-painted voices. She had emptied her pockets of pennies to the beggars that beset her homeward path, and at three o'clock in the afternoon had dusted every article in the quaint room to a fine polish.

Two great broad windows overlooked a sloping hill and the roofs of many houses. Beyond lay the great gray ocean. A side window was shelved from top to sill, and filled with potted plants that bloomed profusely and overran the ugly red clay that inclosed them.

Across one corner stood the piano. It was the only really new thing at hand, and its polished surface took on shadows of the ancient grandeur about it, as if in apology for its presence here. Opposite the flower window was another recess filled with bookshelves, where goodly rows of books had been between the shabby covers of many an old treasure.

A few easy chairs and tables lay cozily about; and the great brick fireplace, with its brass andirons and high old mantel shelf was the heart and core of the room.

Estella laid the fine thin old cloth carefully on the round, polished table, garnishing it by pinning little sprigs of holly on its satin surface.

She placed Urania's chicken by the warm hearthstone, and on a stool near by laid a basket of rosy apples and a pile of bread with the great toast-fork on guard. With much pride of manner she turned out a glass of crab-apple jelly into an old glass dish, and flanked it by another dish of brandied peaches.

"That will surprise the girls," she said, and laughed a little as she showered Penelope's lavish supply of candies in every conceivable little receptacle she could find.

Estella looked queerly. Her black satin gown was old, but she had drawn out the patched waist of a fuchsia of soft yellow lace, and fastened in its folds a bunch of pretty old velvet wall flowers. Her hair had a touch of curling itself into ringlets, and a glint of its old Auburn tint was in its white sheen. Her eyes were bright and her cheeks rosy with expectancy.

Toward five o'clock the shadows grew heavier. Day was almost gone, and she went to the window, looked out a moment on the sea. "Even the great deep is quiet to-day," she said, "and there is no poor lonely Christmas."

She drew the curtains, put a fresh log on the blazing fire and hurried to answer a timid little knock that came on her door.

As the gust of air rushed in she looked up to see Penelope and Urania's heads and hands extended, "whilst they sang nasal tones the old street wail: 'I pray you, merry gentlemen.' Estella laughingly whirled them into the room, saying: 'I am dismayed!'

With many loving kisses, wishes for 'merry Christmas,' and soft little words, they were diverted of wraps and furs and finally nestled down into easy chairs with the restful spirit of the hour floating lightly on their tired senses.

Penelope began knitting some soft, fluffy white thing that grew and grew in amplitude, and Urania, after examining the preparations for supper with pleased anxiety, busied herself with toast-fork and apples.

Estella wandered about the room idly for awhile, saying a few words, and now and again touching the cheek or hair of her old friends with the tips of her slight fingers. Then, finding her seat at the piano, she drifted off into the land of music and ecstasy, a golden-haired child, softly beckoning the way.

Penelope and Urania kept a quiet accompaniment with needles and fork, and up the chimney tiny flame spirits danced, while the sherry logs sang a tune all their own.

As the last notes of "Chopin's Lament" fell on the air, a great tear splashed down Urania's soft cheek and fell into the snowy heart of the last roasted apple.

"Time!" cried Penelope, though her own eyes were moist, and she drove her knitting needle straight through the unsuspecting apple.

Estella sprang up and came laughing to the fireside. Then up jumped the others, and, singing the "Keel Row," danced about the table as in their school days.

The flames shot a pink light on the opposite wall, and made the dancing figures look like little girls. The old portraits on the wall took on a disapproving air, and the little flame spirits leaped, but the great logs sang a soft sweet song, and the dear Christ Child nestled close to the old hearts that had found Him, and careased the wrinkles of faces into images of love and peace.

A FAVORED NATION.

Dr. Talmage Speaks of Prosperity of American People.

Divine Blessings Showered Upon Us—He Draws Comparisons Between Our Own and Other Countries.

(Copyright, 1900, by Louis Klopsch, N. Y.) Washington.

Dr. Talmage preaches a discourse of Christian patriotism and shows the resources of our country and predicts the time when all the world will have the same blessings. His two texts are Revelation xxi, 13: "On the south three gates;" Psalm cxviii: "He hath not dealt so with any nation."

Among the greatest needs of our country is more gratitude to God for the unparalleled prosperity bestowed upon us. One of my texts calls us to international comparison. What nation on all the planet has of late had such enlargement of commercial opportunity as is now opening before this nation? Cuba and Porto Rico and the Philippine islands brought into close contact with us, and through steamship subsidy and Nicaragua canal, which will surely be afforded by congress, all the republics of South America will be brought into most active trade with the United States.

"On the south three gates." While our next-door neighbors, the southern republics and neighboring colonies, imported from European countries 3,000 miles away \$675,000,000 worth of goods in a year, only \$125,000,000 worth went from the United States—\$125,000,000 out of \$675,000,000, only one-fifth of the trade ours. European nations taking the four fingers and leaving us the poor thumb. Now all this is to be changed. There is nothing but a comparative ferry between the islands which have recently come under our protection, and out a ferry between us and Bolivia, Peru, Paraguay, Uruguay, Venezuela, Salvador, Nicaragua, Colombia, Costa Rica, Ecuador, Brazil, while there are raging seas and long voyages between them and Europe. By the mandate of the United States, that will be changed through new facilities of transportation. The Hispano-American congress just closed at Madrid will fall in its attempt to divert all the trade of South America from us to Europe. What encouraging symptoms that our trade with Cuba and Porto Rico has been quadrupled! But that is only a prophecy. "On the south three gates"—yes, a hundred gates!

In anticipation of what is sure to come, I nail on the front door of this nation an advertisement:

Wanted.—One hundred thousand men to build a line through South America and the islands of the sea under our protection.

Wanted.—A thousand telegraph operators.

Wanted.—One hundred million dollars' worth of dry goods from the great cities of the United States.

Wanted.—All the clocks you can make at New Haven and all the brains you can spare from Boston and all the bells you can mold at Troy and all the reapers you can fashion at Chicago and all the hams you can turn out at Cincinnati and all the railroad iron you can produce in Pittsburg—all the statesmen that you can spare from Washington.

Wanted.—Right away, wanted by new and swift steamers, wanted by rail-train, lawyers to plead our causes.

Wanted.—Doctors to cure our sick. Ministers to evangelize our population.

Wanted.—Professors to establish our universities.

"On the south three gates," yes, a thousand gates. South America and all the islands of the sea approximate are rightfully a commercial domain, and congress of the United States will see to it that we get what belongs to us.

And then times of travel will be some what diverted from Europe to our islands at the south and to the land of the Aztecs. Much of the \$125,000,000 worth of goods that Europe and Europe will be expended in southern exploration, in looking at some of the ruins of the 47 cities which Stephens found only a little way apart and in walking through the great doorways and over the miracles of Mosaic and along by monumental glories of ancient civilization, and ancient America will with cold lips of stone kiss the warm lips of modern America, and to have seen the Andes and Popocatepetl will be deemed as important as to have seen the Alpine and Balkan ranges, and there will be fewer people pushed by foreign travel, and in our midst less of the poor and nauseating imitation of the French shrug and the intentional hesitancy of a brainless foreign swell. The fact is that many are made vain by European travel, and though sensible when they embarked, they return with a collar and a cravat and a shoe and a coat and a pronunciation and a contempt for American institutions and a bend of the elbow backward from man to ape. Of the many thousands who now cross the sea annually, thousands, on pleasure and business, visit southern lands, and our tourists and merchants and scientists and capitalists will all help in this national development. "On the south three gates." And what other nation has such openings for commercial enlargement as ours?

Again, in this international comparison notice the happy condition of our country as compared with most countries; Russia, under the shadow of the dreadful illness of her great and good emperor, who now, more than any man in all the world, represents "peace on earth, good will to men," and whose anxious, near the most solemn hour that ever comes to a woman's soul, is

anxious for him to whom she has given hand and heart, not for political reasons, but through old-fashioned love such as blesses our humble dwellings; India, under the agonies of a famine which, though somewhat lifted, has filled hundreds of thousands of graves and thrown millions into orphanage; Austria only waiting for her general Francis Joseph to die so as to let Hungary rise in rebellion and make the palace of Vienna quiver with insurrection; Spain in Carlist revolution and pauperized; Italy under the horrors of her king's assassination; China shuddering with a fear of dismemberment, her capital in possession of foreign nations. After a review of the condition of other lands can you find more appropriate utterance in regard to our country than the exclamation of the text: "He hath not dealt so with any nation?"

Compare the autumnal report of harvests in America this year and the harvests abroad. Last summer I crossed the continent of Europe twice, and I saw no such harvests as are spoken of in this statement. Hear it, all you men and women who want everybody to have enough to eat and wear. I have to tell you that the corn crop of our country this year is one of the four largest crops on record—2,105,000,000 bushels! The cotton crop, though smaller than at some times, will on that account bring bigger prices, and so cotton planters of the south are prosperous. The wheatfields have provided bread enough and to spare. The potato crop, one of the five largest on record—211,000,000 bushels! Twenty-two million two hundred thousand swine slain, and yet so many hogs left!

But now I give you the comparative exports and imports, which tell the story of national prosperity as nothing else can. Excess of exports over imports, \$544,400,000. Now let all pessimists hide themselves in the dens and caves of the earth, while all grateful souls fill the churches with doxology. Notice also that while other countries are at their wits' ends as to their finances this nation has money to lend. Germany, we are glad to see you in Wall Street. France has borrowed money, we have it all ready. How much will you have? Russia, we also welcome you into our money markets. Give us good collateral. Meanwhile, Denmark, will you please accept our offer of \$3,000,000 for the island of St. Thomas? My hearers, there is no nation on earth with such healthy condition of finances. We wickedly waste an awful amount of money in this country, but some one has said it is easier to manage a surplus than a deficit.

Besides this, we have in our country plenty of room, while the trans-Atlantic nations are crowded—crowded cities, crowded governments, crowded learned institutions, implying what fertility and commerce! Four basins pouring their waters into the Atlantic, Pacific, Arctic and Gulf of Mexico! When I hear a man expressing the fear that this country is going to be crowded, I know right away he has not been to Texas. France has about 39,000,000 of people, but Texas is larger than France; Germany about 67,000,000 of people, but Texas is larger than Germany.

Again, there is no land on earth where the political condition is so satisfactory as in ours. Every two years in the state and every four years in the nation we clean house. After a vehement expression of the people at the ballot box in the autumnal election they all seem satisfied, and if they are not satisfied, at any rate they smile. An Englishman asked me in an English rail train this question: "How do you people stand it in America with a revolution every four years? Would it not be better, like us, to have a queen for a lifetime and everything settled?" But England changes government just as certainly as we do. At some adverse vote in parliament one goes one party and in comes another. Administrations change there, but not as advantageously as with us, for there they may change almost any day, while with us a party in power continues in power at least four years.

It is said that in our country we have more dishonesty in the use of public funds than in other lands. The difference is that in our country almost every official has a chance to make a fortune, while in other lands a few people absorb so much that the others have no chance at appropriation. The reason they do not steal is because they cannot get their hands on it. The governments of Europe are so expensive that after the salaries of the royal families are paid there is not much left to misappropriate. The emperor of Russia has a nice little salary of \$8,210,000. The emperor of Austria has a yearly salary of \$4,000,000. Victoria, the queen, has a salary of \$2,500,000. The royal plate of St. James palace is worth \$10,000,000. There is a host of attendants, all on salaries, some of them \$5,000 a year, some \$6,000 a year. Comptroller of the household, mistress of the robes, captain of gold sticks, lieutenant of silver sticks, clerk of the powder closet, pages of the office, has a chance to make a fortune, while in other lands a few people absorb so much that the others have no chance at appropriation. The reason they do not steal is because they cannot get their hands on it. The governments of Europe are so expensive that after the salaries of the royal families are paid there is not much left to misappropriate. The emperor of Russia has a nice little salary of \$8,210,000. The emperor of Austria has a yearly salary of \$4,000,000. Victoria, the queen, has a salary of \$2,500,000. The royal plate of St. James palace is worth \$10,000,000. There is a host of attendants, all on salaries, some of them \$5,000 a year, some \$6,000 a year. 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